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THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT AND THE AXIS

Official German Documents

March * DEPARTMENT OF STATE * UNITED STATES OF AMERICA * 1946

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THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT AND THE AXIS

Documents

March * 1946 *

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I

STATEMENT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE[1]

THE GOVERNMENTS of France, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America have exchanged views with regard to the present Spanish Government and their relations with that regime. It is agreed that so long as General Franco continues in control of Spain, the Spanish people cannot anticipate full and cordial association with those nations of the world which have, by common effort, brought defeat to German Nazism and Italian Fascism, which aided the present Spanish regime in its rise to power and after which the regime was patterned.

There is no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of Spain. The Spanish people themselves must in the long run work out their own destiny. In spite of the present regime's repressive measures against orderly efforts of the Spanish people to organize and give expression to their political aspirations, the three Governments are hopeful that the Spanish people will not again be subjected to the horrors and bitterness of civil strife.

On the contrary, it is hoped that leading patriotic and liberal-minded Spaniards may soon find means to bring about a peaceful withdrawal of Franco, the abolition of the Falange, and the establishment of an interim or caretaker government under which the Spanish people may have an opportunity freely to determine the type of government they wish to have and to choose their leaders. Political amnesty, return of exiled Spaniards, freedom of assembly and political association and provision for free public elections are essential. An interim government which would be and would remain dedicated to these ends should receive the recognition and support of all freedom-loving peoples.

Such recognition would include full diplomatic relations and the taking of such practical measures to assist in the solution of Spain's economic problems as may be practicable in the circumstances

[1] This statement was released to the press by the Department of State on Mar. 4, 1946.

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prevailing. Such measures are not now possible. The question of the maintenance or termination by the Governments of France, the United Kingdom, and the United States of diplomatic relations with the present Spanish regime is a matter to be decided in the light of events and after taking into account the efforts of the Spanish people to achieve their own freedom.

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II

DOCUMENTS[1]

No. 1. Memorandum by the German Ambassador in Madrid

STRICTLY SECRET! BERLIN, *August 8, 1940*

Operation: *Gibraltar*

Conditions for Spain's entry into the war

According to a memorandum presented in June of this year by the Spanish Embassy, the Spanish Government declares itself ready, under certain conditions, to give up its position as a "non-belligerent" state and to enter the war on the side of Germany and Italy. The Spanish Foreign Minister, and also the Minister of the Interior, have up until the last few days repeatedly pointed out this Spanish offer to me, so that it may be assumed that Spain even today will keep its promise made in June.

As conditions for entry into the war, the Spanish Government cites the following:

1. Fulfilment of a set of national territorial demands, Gibraltar, French Morocco, that part of Algeria colonized and predominantly inhabited by Spaniards (Oran), and further the enlargement of Rio de Oro and of the colonies in the Gulf of Guinea;
2. Making available military and other assistance required for carrying on the war.

The memorandum of Admiral Canaris enclosed here[2] gives detailed information regarding the extent of military assistance apparently necessary.

Besides this military assistance, however, economic support of Spain will also be necessary. To this belong, above all else, the

[1] This series of 15 documents (translations) was released to the press by the Department of State on Mar. 4, 1946.

[2] Not printed.

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delivery of gasoline and, at the beginning of next year, delivery of grain for bread. According to a recent utterance of the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs (of the third of this month) Spain, due to its shortage of gasoline, can wage war without our help 1½ months at the most. As concerns the grain for bread, the Minister believes that Spain has sufficient supplies until about March of next year. I consider this latter supposition as too optimistic, unless a strict rationing is carried out.

Besides this necessary assistance however, Spain, beginning with entry into the war, will with respect to a number of other commodities as well be exclusively left to the resources of German and Italian aid.

Advantages of the Operation

1. The effect of the declaration of war on England by a new country will be very strong in England and on the entire world; England's prestige and her prospects for victory will receive a new severe blow, while—upon success of the operation—our prestige will be greatly increased.
2. England will no longer be able to carry on trade with Spain, thus will receive from there no more ores and above all no more pyrite.
3. Nullification of English property rights in ore and copper mines, et cetera.
4. A victorious execution of the operation will mean the control of the Straits.

Dangers of the Operation for Spain

1. It would be possible that England, after becoming aware of Spain's war preparations would beat Spain to the draw and begin war operations.
2. For this purpose she could attempt to extend the territory of Gibraltar in order thereby to make the attack upon Gibraltar more difficult. England could further occupy the Canary Islands, Tangier, and the Spanish colonies, operations which without doubt will result at least in part after the outbreak of war. Spain even considers the Balearic Islands as being threatened.
3. A break between Spain and England can have consequences for Portugal. The English could occupy Lisbon and Lagos or other places in Portugal so that Spain would have a land front. In case of an occupation of Portuguese harbors Salazar is said to have naturally

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held out to the Spaniards the prospect of military counter-measures, and to have declared himself agreed to a Spanish entry for rendering assistance against England.

4. Outbreak of the war between Spain and England can bring events to a head in North Africa, especially Morocco, where the situation is very tense. Spain distrusts the Resident General Nogues who is said to be ogling with the English. Therefore a cooperative English-French-Moroccan operation against the Spanish zone and Tangier would be possible.

5. Because of debilitation resulting from the Civil War, Spain is economically unfit to carry through to the end a war lasting more than a few months, if she does not receive economic aid from German and Italian quarters. Aside from gasoline, this, as mentioned above, is true of grain for bread as well.

6. As a result of an intensification of the grave economic situation and eventual starvation and as a result of political and military set-backs (loss of islands, of the colonies) domestic riots could result. This danger I do not consider as very grave at first, since the Army is intact. Should the war be of longer duration however, the situation could become serious.

Difficulties and Dangers for Us

1. For transporting the necessary war material to Spain, only the railroad line Bordeaux-Hendaye-(border)-Irun-San Sebastián-Burgos and so forth and the road running parallel are available. Within the border area occupied by our troops there is only one other passageway over the Pyrenees, namely, at St. Jean Pied de Porc. According to information from General of the Infantry von Both in Biarritz, only passenger cars and light trucks can travel on this pass-road because of its narrow curves. The transporting of all war material must therefore go along the coast where for long stretches, between Bayonne and San Sebastián, the railroad and the road can be observed and fired upon from the sea. A further difficulty exists in the fact that the Spanish railroad has a different gage from the French so that reloadings are necessary and such equipment as railway guns cannot be transported on. Heavy artillery and other [artillery] are therefore confined exclusively to the roads.

2. The claims upon Germany to deliver weapons and supply special troops should meet with no objections. On the other hand, should the war be of longer duration, the economic assistance requested of us could represent a great burden (especially with respect to nutrition).

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If the operation is undertaken, it is in any case necessary:

1. To have the preparations go forward in as camouflaged a manner as possible, to make available in Spain supplies of gasoline and war material (ammunition, bombs) which can be unobtrusively transported by railroad and truck, and, not until the last moment, to bring the heavy guns collected in the south of France across the border by fast transit and into the prepared emplacements, while the air arm is absolutely not to make its appearance until the operation begins in earnest.

2. The moment for initiating the preparations and the operation itself must be adjusted to the expected development of things in England itself, in order to avoid a too early entry of Spain into the war, that is to say, a period of war unendurable for Spain, and thus under certain circumstances the beginning of a source of danger for us.

STOHRER

No. 2. Letter From General Franco to Mussolini

Chief of State and Generalissimo
of the Spanish Army

MADRID, *August 15, 1940*

DEAR DUCE:

Since the beginning of the present conflict, it has been our intention to make the greatest efforts in our preparations, in order to enter the foreign war at a favorable opportunity in proportion to the means at our disposal, since the lack of the most vital provisions and the interruption of communications with Italy and Germany hindered every operation at the moment.

The rapid and devastating victories in Flanders altered the situation; the defeat of France liberated our frontiers, lessening the grave tension which we along with our Moroccans have been bearing since our Civil War.

From this moment, our horizon became brighter, our operation became possible and could become very effective, once the difficulties of provisioning have been removed.

In this manner, upon the entry of your Nation into the war, we had to take a clearer stand, one of alertness, changing to one of nonbelligerency, which, in the field of foreign affairs, could not fail to

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have great repercussions. This awakened jealousy and opposition, and unleashed an Anglo-American offensive against our provisioning, aggravated in these days by the new measures taken by the United States against our exports, and by the English blockade measures, causing grave tension in our relations with those countries.

The consequences, which the conquest of France is to have for the reorganization of the North African territories have made it advisable for me, now that the time has come, to charge my Ambassador in Rome with transmitting to Your Excellency the Spanish aspirations and claims traditionally maintained throughout our history in the foreign policy of Spain, today more alive than ever in our consciousness; to territories, whose present administration is a consequence of that Franco-English policy of domination and exploitation, of which Italy also bears so many scars. To the legitimate Spanish aspirations are added in this case the requirements for security necessitating the elimination of a weak and thinly protected frontier, and the assuring of our communications with the Canary Island group.

In this manner, Spain in addition to the contribution which she made to the establishment of the New Order, through our years of hard struggle, offers another in preparing herself to take her place in the struggle against the common enemies.

In this sense, we have requested from Germany the necessities for action, while we push forward the preparations and make every effort to better the provisioning situation as far as possible.

For all these reasons, you will understand the urgency in writing you, to ask your solidarity in these aspirations for the achievement of our security and greatness, while I at the same time assure you of our unconditional support for your expansion and your future.

With my greatest admiration for the brave Italian comrades who are fighting so gloriously, I send you my most cordial regards.

F. FRANCO

To His Excellency
Senor BENITO MUSSOLINI
Head of the Italian Government
Italy.

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No. 3. Letter From Mussolini to General Franco

The Chief of Government
and Duce of Fascism

ROME, *August 25, 1940*

To the Head of the Spanish Government
Generalissimo Don FRANCISCO FRANCO BAHAMONDE
MADRID.

DEAR FRANCO!

I thank you for the letter which you have sent me, and in which you sketch the position of Spain in the present stage of the war.

I should like to make it clear to you at once, that your letter has not surprised me.

Ever since the outbreak of the war I have been constantly of the opinion that "your" Spain, the Spain of the Falange Revolution, could not remain neutral until the end of the war, but at the right moment would change to non-belligerency and finally to intervention.

Should that not happen, Spain would alienate herself from European history, especially the history of the future, which the two victorious Axis powers will determine.

Furthermore, she would have no moral justification for the solution of her African questions, and, let me say to you, a victorious revolution must set itself extreme goals of an international type, such goals, therefore, as can, at a given moment, require the complete attention and the total effort of a people.

It is clear to me that Spain, after three years of civil war, needed a long period of recuperation, but events will not permit it, and your domestic economic condition will not get worse when you change from non-belligerency to intervention.

I should like to say to you, dear Franco, that I, with these my practical considerations, do not wish to hasten you in the least in the decision that you have to make, for I am sure that in your decisions you will proceed on the basis of the protection of the vital interests of your people and am just as certain that you will not let this opportunity go by of giving Spain her African *Lebensraum*.

There is no doubt that after France, Great Britain will be defeated; the British regime exists only on one single element: the lie.

I certainly do not need to tell you that you, in your aspirations, can count on the full solidarity of Fascist Italy.

I beg you, dear Franco, to accept my most cordial and comradely greetings.

MUSSOLINI

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No. 4. Notes of a Conversation Between the Führer and the Spanish Minister of the Interior Serrano Suñer in the Presence of the Reichs Foreign Minister in Berlin on September 17, 1940

As a preliminary Serrano Suñer delivered a short and voluntary message of Generalissimo Franco, in which the latter expressed to the Führer his gratitude, sympathy, and high esteem, and emphasized to him his loyalty of yesterday, of today, and for always. Franco had commissioned him to bring about a direct contact with the German Government in this decisive time. Since he had already informed the Reichs Foreign Minister of the Spanish wishes, he did not at the moment want to come back to that again, but only wished to emphasize that the Spanish attitude toward Germany had not changed in the least. It was not a question of a revision of the Spanish foreign policy, but only of a clarification of the conditions under which Spain was ready to fight the war together with Germany. Whenever Spain's supply of foodstuffs and war material was secure she could immediately enter the war. With reference to the war material, Suñer declared that the details of the Spanish wishes had been conveyed to Admiral Canaris and Suñer made precise the wish for placing artillery at their disposal specifying that the Spaniards considered ten 38-centimeter guns necessary for Gibraltar.

The Führer replied that the German people had not forgotten the stand which Spain had taken in the World War and that this feeling of appreciation had been the most profound cause for the German conduct during the Civil War. Now Germany was in the decisive struggle against England. Continentally this struggle was already decided. A British landing on the Continent was to be characterized as an absolute chimera. The only military possibility still existing was an attempt by England to alienate the French colonies in North Africa from the Pétain government and use them as a new position for the continuation of the war. Aside from that, England had no more opportunities whatever for penetration into the European Continent, from Norway to Spain and Portugal.

In this connection, Suñer pointed to the Spanish fear concerning an English landing on the Cantabrian coast and in this regard mentioned that Communistic elements in the population of the Asturias would render the situation very complicated in the event of such a landing attempt. The Führer replied that he could set Suñer's mind at rest in this respect on the basis of landing experiences with landings in Norway where indeed the entire population had been on the side of the English, and the latter, in spite of that, could achieve no success,

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In Norway it had also been shown that coast artillery was not suitable for repelling an attack, but instead that air defense brought the most favorable results. If a group of *Stukas* and a group of heavy pursuit planes were made available for the conquest of Gibraltar, then within eight days no enemy ship would any longer dare to venture into these Spanish areas within a radius of 350 kilometers for the heavy bombs of 1,800 kilograms which these machines carried could perhaps not completely destroy a ship but with a direct hit would render it so incapable of battle that a repair of several months would be necessary. The English, however, would not want to run such a risk. In Norway, however, we had forced the English to retreat only through the use of *Stukas*.

When Serrano Suñer for his part pointed again to the great strength of the fortress of Gibraltar, the Führer replied that an attack with heavy artillery against an establishment of that type would not be as effective as would be an operation with the special weapons used in overwhelming the Maginot Line. Heavy aerial bombs had an effect many times as great as the heaviest artillery and even the works of the Maginot Line could not stand up under it, since armored structures which according to World War experience could withstand the heaviest artillery, had been annihilated by 1,000-, 1,400- and 1,800-kilogram aerial bombs inside of ten minutes. Even when there was no direct hit, the concussion effect of a 1,000-kilogram bomb was in itself tremendous. Therefore, the decisive factor for the conquest and later defense of Gibraltar is the guaranteeing of absolute air supremacy.

To be sure, we had set up heavy artillery on the Channel coast; it was however intended only for very bad weather when penetration by air attacks upon the enemy positions was completely out of the question. Aside from that the installation of 38-centimeter guns lasts several months. Already in the middle of July we had installed the batteries erected in the vicinity of Calais.

The superiority of the *Stukas* as compared to the heavy artillery is shown by the following figures: A great long-barreled gun could fire 200 rounds without repair, while a *Stuka* squadron of 36 machines in use thrice daily could drop 120 bombs of 1,000 kilograms each, every one of which contained the appropriate amount of high-powered explosives, while a 38-centimeter shell contained only 70 to 75 kilograms of explosives.

It (was a sure thing that one could not long resist the attack of a)[1] dive-bombing group of *Junkers* 88's and that, at the approach of this feared opponent, the English fleet would immediately get away from Gibraltar and from the entire vicinity.

[1] Probable translation; text indistinct in microfilm.

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The Führer declared further that it would not be possible to provide 38-centimeter guns for Gibraltar. Even the transporting would involve extraordinary difficulties, and the installation would require three to four months. Germany could, however, make special artillery available for the Gibraltar undertaking. Moreover, it was clear that Germany would do everything in her power to help Spain. For once Spain entered the war, Germany would have every interest in her success, since indeed a Spanish victory would be a German one at the same time.

In the Gibraltar undertaking, it would be primarily a matter of taking the fortress itself with extraordinary speed and protecting the Straits.

Serrano Suñer thanked the Führer and pointed out that in the previous discussions which had taken place on this subject between German military experts, among others General von Richthofen, and Admiral Canaris, and General Franco, the German intentions had not clearly come to light, indeed, quite on the contrary a certain confusion had arisen. Because of the Führer's statements, the military possibilities had appeared in an entirely new light. He was asking the Führer whether he was ready to put down in writing the views just expressed so that he could convey them to General Franco on his return.

The Führer promised this and emphasized that the question of the capture of Gibraltar had already been studied exactingly by the Germans. For example, a commission of German front-line officers who had had a leading part in the conquest of important French and Belgian fortifications, like Fort Eben Emaël and the Maginot Line, had gone to Spain in order to examine the question on the spot. On the basis of the impressions of this commission as well as of the particulars about the condition of Gibraltar which Germany had possessed from former times or obtained recently through Admiral Canaris they had come to the conclusion that Gibraltar could be conquered by a modern attack with relatively modest means. It was a matter of methods which Germany had already used so successfully in the west. Gibraltar was definitely less capable of resistance than the fortifications in the west. (Casemated)[1] guns could be silenced more easily than perchance the guns of the Maginot Line which were installed in armored cupolas, and the exposed artillery of Gibraltar could be overwhelmed even more easily. The military cooperation of Germany in the Spanish war would consist of:

1. immediately expelling enemy ships from the Straits, and
2. making available a small troop of specialists with special weapons by whom Gibraltar could be quickly overwhelmed without great

[1] Probable translation; text indistinct in microfilm.

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sacrifice of blood. This would be a matter of a small selected special troop of assault engineers equipped with special armor-destroying guns—the so-called "*Scharten*" or "Pillbox-crackers." As soon as Gibraltar was taken, the problem of the Mediterranean would therewith be settled and no serious danger from French Morocco either could any longer threaten.

In the further course of the conversation, Serrano Suñer, in the same fashion as in his conference with the Reichs Foreign Minister again criticized a few Spanish diplomats. In Berlin, Spain had unfortunately been represented by an Ambassador too old and too liberal-minded, but the Falange had not been able to build up the necessary young forces fast enough to fill the posts important in foreign policy with the right people. The Führer replied that he had great appreciation of this difficulty for Germany also in certain instances in 1934 still had representatives abroad with the spirit of 1932. Suñer seized upon this remark and said that Germany in fact had not always been well represented in Salamanca also. Sometimes it was a matter of Germans who, to be sure, spoke Spanish because they had formerly lived in South America, but who had had no idea of the actual Spanish problems and of the Spanish spiritual sphere.

In the further course of the conversation, Serrano Suñer came to speak about Morocco, and justified the Spanish claims for it in a manner similar to that in the conversation with the Reichs Foreign Minister. He characterized Morocco as Spain's *Lebensraum* and as her natural expansion objective. For reasons of domestic strengthening of the regime and of external security, Spain was raising the known territorial demands.

The Führer agreed with him in the last point with the remark that many a domestic difficulty which Spain at the moment perhaps still had to face could quickly and easily be overcome by successes with foreign policy. This was an old historical experience. Moreover, it was a matter of two questions:

1. of the problem of the war, which essentially was a military question, and
2. of the future configuration of the relationships in Europe and Africa.

Here Germany on the one hand had economic interests—she wanted to buy raw materials and sell finished manufactured goods—and on the other hand there was the problem of security for her African future in Central Africa. For under (certain) conditions, a great danger could threaten her possessions there and even the whole New Order as well. It was not out of the question that England and France would try to entice America to the Azores and in these

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efforts find support in certain imperialistic tendencies of America now already coming to the fore. England could in this way gain a foothold in the islands stretching out in front of Africa—whereby, in time, a very unpleasant situation would arise. For the Continent would be dependent upon that power which kept the outlying islands occupied, especially if it concerned a power with naval superiority. Now the control of the seas could be exercised neither by Italy, nor by Germany, nor by Spain. Therefore, it was necessary to set up defensive strong points on the islands in good time . . . [1]

To this, Serrano Suñer remarked that Germany had won the war and could claim the leadership in the New Order. The defense of the European-African area, however, must take place within the framework of a military alliance of the three powers and of a wise policy. The Führer continuing explained the German interests. It was a matter of:

First, to render the northern area free from the blockade;

Second, to create security toward the east for danger always threatened from the east, and Germany was filling a very useful role as the eastern bulwark for Europe; and

Third, to assure Germany a great colonial area, which was not, however, a matter of area for settlement, of which she possessed enough on the European Continent, but instead purely a matter of raw material colonies.[2]

After a one-hour duration the interview was concluded.

SCHMIDT
Minister

September 19, 1940.

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[1] Most of one paragraph illegible on microfilm.

[2] Two subsequent paragraphs are illegible in the material available and have therefore been omitted here.

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No. 5. Letter From Generalissimo Franco to Hitler

Chief of State
Generalissimo of the
National Military Forces

September 22, 1940

MY DEAR FÜHRER!

I received your letter in which you stated to me your views and those of your General Staff in connection with the problems with respect to Spain which are arising from the war, views which with the exception of small details match my thoughts and plans and those of my General Staffs.

I must thank you for the cordial reception which you and your people prepared for my envoy, Minister Serrano Suñer, who reported to me about your conversation and about your esteemed ideas, which satisfy our wishes, and with which we believe ourselves to be in complete agreement, as you will see from the content of this letter. In spite of complete agreement with your words "to recognize the Spanish claims to Morocco with the one limitation of assuring Germany through favorable commercial agreements a share in the raw material of this area", there is to be sure one point where they are inconsistent, namely in the wishes of Herr von Ribbentrop, expressed in the form of a proposal during the conversations between our Ministers, for the establishment of an enclave for German military bases by occupying both the two harbors of the southern zone. These are, according to our opinion, unnecessary in peacetime, and superfluous in wartime, because in this case, you can count upon not only these harbors but on all of them that Spain possesses, since our friendship is to be sealed firmly for the future as well. The advantages that these bases could offer would neither counter-balance the difficulties which this type of enclave always produces nor the harm which they cause to the areas involved whose outlet to the sea they constitute.

I thank you very much for your idea, put before Minister Suñer, of providing me with an opportunity for us to meet near the Spanish border, for, apart from my eager wish to greet you personally, we could have a more thorough and more direct exchange of ideas than our present communications make possible. I should therefore like to state to you my opinion about the individual points of your letter.

1. In regard to your trains of thought set forth in point one concerning the political and economic effects of the present struggle, I can only say to you that I have agreed from the first day on with your opinion expressed there. Only our isolation and the lack of resources most indispensable for our national existence made our operation impossible.

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I am in agreement with you that driving the English out of the Mediterranean Sea will improve the condition of our transports, although it is self-evident that not all questions of the provisioning of Spain will be solved thereby since there are many products and raw materials which Spain lacks, and which are not to be found in the Mediterranean basin.

2. I am likewise, of the opinion that the first act in our attack must consist in the occupation of Gibraltar. In this sense our military policy in the Straits since 1936 has been directed by anticipating the English intentions of expanding and protecting their bases.

I agree with your opinion that it is possible to aim at the success of this operation within a few days by the use of modern equipment and tried troops. In this sense, the equipment which you offer me will be of great effect.

For our part, we have been preparing the operation in secret for a long time, since the area in which it is to take place has no suitable network of communications. With respect to the special conditions of the rock, points of resistance can withstand even the strongest action from the air, so that they will have to be destroyed by good and accurate artillery. The extraordinary importance of the project would, in my opinion, justify a strong concentration of resources.

3. The fall of Gibraltar would actually protect the western Mediterranean, and rule out any danger, except the dangers which might arise in passing should De Gaulle succeed with his plan for rebellion in Algiers and Tunis.

A concentration of our troops in Morocco will prevent this danger.

In this respect, it would be suitable for your control commission to increase the precautionary measures to the utmost.

4. I completely share your opinion about the effectiveness of dive-bombers for the defense of the coasts, as well as about the actual impossibility of establishing fixed artillery emplacements with heavy material on the vulnerable points on the coast. Evidently a mistake has crept into the transmittal of my wish, for my wish concerned not stationary guns of large caliber, but movable material of about 20 centimeters. I consider this necessary for the future as well and indeed in moderate quantities because of the conditions of the terrain which is mountainous and irregular. The possibility of constructing airports is therefore extraordinarily limited. In most cases, these will lie far removed from the coast and from the objects to be defended. Furthermore, one must reckon with the limitations which necessarily result from the storms and rains frequently occurring there.

In any case, the strong air forces offered by you are indispensable.

5. At the present moment, there is actually little probability of the English undertaking a landing attempt on the peninsula. Even if

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this should be the case, our own resources and those which you offer me would quickly ruin this plan.

6. The possibility of a surprise attack on the Canary Islands by the English in order to create a naval base for themselves to protect overseas connections has always been a worry of mine. Within the scope of our possibilities we are about to lay aside there supplies of food, ammunition, and sufficient artillery-material which we are getting from other less-threatened regions; we effected a partial mobilization several months ago, and also have sent arms for the entire archipelago. We have transferred a group of pursuit pilots there who would no longer have been able to get there once the war had begun. I am of your opinion and consider the presence of dive-bombers and destroyer planes in Las Palmas extremely useful, for which bomb material and spare parts must be sent in advance.

7. Obviously freedom of movement in the western Mediterranean is dependent upon Italian successes in Alexandria and Suez, by which the destruction of the English fleet in these waters will be made possible. At such a moment, a great part of our provisioning problem would be solved.

8. I consider the offer contained in your Point 8 for our undertaking as extremely useful and absolutely necessary. For the economic aid which you offer me with such foresight and in the highest measure possible for Germany is just as important as the military equipment. For our part, I offer you reciprocal aid of the same type and to the greatest extent possible considering our potentialities.

In the meantime I consider it my duty to point out to you that in my opinion the conversations hitherto conducted by our specialists have taken the course of negotiations more of a purely commercial orientation. By having treated the settlement of old matters, by wanting to solve the economic problems and the post-war exchange of commodities, they have deviated from the main subject, which affects both parties equally and which will find its complete solution in the statements of your letter, with which I completely agree.

I would like to thank you, dear Führer, once again for the offer of solidarity. I reply with the assurance of my unchangeable and sincere adherence to you personally, to the German people, and to the cause for which you fight. I hope, in defense of this cause, to be able to renew the old bonds of comradeship between our armies.

In the expectation of being able to express this to you personally, I assure you of my most sincere feelings of friendship and I greet you,

Your

F. Franco

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No. 6. Notes Covering the Interview Between the Führer and Count Ciano in the Presence of the Reichs Foreign Minister and the State Secretary Meissner in Berlin on September 28, 1940

At the beginning the Führer directed to Count Ciano the question whether the possibility existed for a meeting with the Duce at the Brenner. He considered it right to bring about an exchange of opinion with the Duce concerning the general situation but especially also concerning the Spanish question, before far-reaching decisions were to be made. Also he wanted to speak with him about the strategic situation. As concerned Spain, Germany, on the basis of the experiences gained during the Civil War, was clear about the fact that one could not make progress with the Spanish without quite concrete and detailed agreements. It was critical for Germany and Italy successfully to end the war in great security and in as short a time as possible.

The Spanish proposals to Germany, somewhat crassly expressed, go as far as the following:

1. Germany is to deliver for the coming year 400,000–700,000 tons of grain;
2. Germany is to deliver all the fuel;
3. Germany is to deliver the lacking equipment for the Army;
4. Germany is to put up artillery, airplanes, as well as special weapons and special troops for the conquest of Gibraltar;
5. Germany is to hand over all of Morocco and besides that, Oran, and is to help her get a border revision in the west of Rio de Oro;
6. Spain is to promise to Germany, in return, her friendship.

One must think it over thoroughly if one intends to enter into such obligations and if one is to bar other possibilities from oneself. Aside from that, he (the Führer) was afraid that the agreements concerning Morocco would somehow leak through and become known in France. In this case the French would possibly even come to an agreement with the English, if they knew that Morocco would be lost to them in any case after the conclusion of the war. At all events, it would be more favorable for Germany if the French remained in Morocco and defended it against the English. If the Spanish were to occupy the territory, they probably would only call for German and Italian help in the event of an English attack, and moreover they would let the tempo of their Civil War prevail in their military measures. It was therefore necessary to talk over very calmly for a few hours with the Duce the whole question in the light of its usefulness and its military significance, especially since the deliveries demanded of Germany

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would represent a great sacrifice, which after all could not be made only in return for the good graces of the Spanish. Thus far, at any rate, the Spanish had not yet held out the prospect of an equivalent. One must ponder the problem very coolly and examine it in the light of its possible effects. The case would be entirely clear if Spain would assume distinct obligations. Considering the uncertainty of the Spanish attitude, Germany and Italy in this interview between the Führer and the Duce would have to take a similar stand on the Spanish problem. The agreements with Spain would only contain obligations for her partners and in practice would have to be made good militarily by Germany and Italy. The consequences could be very unpleasant. It would not be impossible that, the commitments concerning Morocco and Oran becoming known, North Africa even might fall into the hands of the English. That would make a conquest of this territory necessary. This military undertaking would have to be carried out over the very dubious bridge, Spain, during which the possibility would definitely exist that Spain then would withdraw again into her neutrality. At all events, England would then have in Africa a great number of air bases, which to be sure would not be decisive for the war, but which could really turn out to be very unpleasant, since air penetration from Germany and Italy would be difficult on account of the great distance.

The Führer then mentioned in this connection the invitation which Franco had extended to him to meet with him on the Spanish-French border. He did not yet know whether he ought to accept this invitation. It would all depend on the conversation with the Duce. In any case he was not convinced that Spain had "the same intensity of will for giving as for taking". Moreover it was customary for allies to support one another reciprocally; in the case of Spain, however, the reciprocity would have to be missed.

When Spain was engaged in the Civil War, Germany had supported Franco in a very extensive measure considering her [Germany's] condition at the time. This support moreover had not been without risk. It was not limited only to the delivery of *matériel*, but volunteers were also made available and many Germans and Italians had fallen in Spain. He did not intend to compute this blood sacrifice in terms of economic values, but instead considered it an outright gift to Spain.

Economically Germany had given out many hundreds of millions for Spain. He (the Führer) had taken the stand that the payment of this debt should be left alone during the war, however that it would have to be taken up again after the victory of Franco. Whenever the Germans demand the payment of the 400 million debt incurred during the Spanish Civil War, this is often interpreted by the Spanish

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as a tactless confusing of economic and idealistic considerations, and as a German, one feels toward the Spanish almost like a Jew, who wants to make business out of the holiest possessions of mankind. Therefore in all agreements with the Spanish one must to begin with clearly stipulate the terms, and if Germany is to furnish grain, the question of compensation must be settled now already.

Italy and Germany had done very much for Spain in the year 1936. Italy just had its Abyssinia undertaking behind her, while Germany was in the midst of her rearming. Without the help of both the countries there would today be no Franco.

From all these considerations a joint discussion with the Duce was necessary before making further decisions which could be very far-reaching. In no case should any step which would be undertaken with regard to Spain lead to a deterioration of the strategic position in the Mediterranean Sea.

Count Ciano replied that the Duce certainly would gladly seize the opportunity for a discussion with the Führer. He had already frequently spoken to him (Ciano) about it. Would the Führer like to make a suggestion concerning the date.

Moreover the Duce had the same fears as those the Führer had just mentioned concerning the difficulties involved in an entry of Spain into the war. Italy also had not forgotten the experiences of the Spanish Civil War. At that time Franco had declared that if he received 12 transport planes or bombers, he would have the war won in a few days. These 12 airplanes became more than one thousand airplanes, 6 thousand dead, and 14 billion lire. With all due sympathy for Spain, this had upon reflection proven in fact to be right, and now again the Duce feared that many sacrifices would be demanded of Italy and Germany without return. Aside from this, it was to be feared that following the pattern of the Spanish Civil War, Spain's demands as now reported would be increased more and more in the further course of events. Therefore caution was in order and a discussion very appropriate.

It was then decided to hold the discussion between the Führer and the Duce at the Brenner in connection with the visit of Serrano Suñer in Rome on Friday, October 4, 1940.

BERLIN, *September 29, 1940*

SCHMIDT
Minister

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No. 7. Letter From Serrano Suñer to Von Ribbentrop

EL PRESIDENTE DE LA JUNTA POLITICA
DE
FALANGE ESPANOLA TRADICIONALISTA Y DE LAS JONS

MADRID *10 October 1940*

To His Excellency

J. VON RIBBENTROP, *Minister of Foreign Affairs of the German Reich*

MY DEAR MR. MINISTER:

Upon my return from Berlin and Rome I had several conversations with the Caudillo for the purpose of continuing the examination of the questions and viewpoints which were considered during our meeting in the capital of the Reich. We have at hand the proposals of an economic character which were formulated by the German Government and expect shortly to make a concrete counter-proposal with the object of arriving at an agreement on those matters, as well as on those dealing with the details and circumstances of the ten-year military alliance with Germany and Italy. We believe that all of these should be negotiated with the utmost secrecy in order not to jeopardize the several shiploads of Argentine and Canadian wheat which we are endeavoring—with great difficulty—to acquire. All of this for the good of the common cause. This will be done in such a way that while the rank and file of our diplomatic service continue keeping the balance in order to obtain the greatest possible quantities of wheat and gasoline, our negotiations will be carried on through our personal contacts and through secret correspondence between the Führer and the Caudillo.

We have in the Canary Islands four batteries, an important group of pursuit planes and machine-gun nests, all of which dispose of the possibility of an English or American landing. One of the bravest generals of our army departed yesterday to take command of the Grand Canary.

We have just finished sending to Morocco two additional divisions under good command. The Caudillo has requested me to inform you of his impression that De Gaulle is preparing an uprising in Oran.

While reiterating the expression of my personal friendship toward you, please be good enough to renew my respects to the Führer, with best wishes for the collaboration of our two peoples for the common good.

RAMÓN SERRANO SUÑER

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No. 8. Notes on the Conversation Between the Führer and the Caudillo in the Führer's Parlor Car at the Railroad Station at Hendaye on October 23, 1940

At the beginning the Caudillo expressed his satisfaction about the fact that he was at the moment able to make the personal acquaintance of the Führer and to render to him Spain's thanks for everything that Germany has done for his country up to the present. Spain has always been allied with the German people spiritually without any reservation and in complete loyalty. In the same sense, Spain has in every moment felt herself at one with the Axis. In the Civil War the soldiers of the three countries had fought together and a profound unity has arisen among them. Likewise, Spain would, in the future, attach herself closely to Germany for historically there were between Spain and Germany only forces of unity, and none of separation.

In the present war as well, Spain would gladly fight at Germany's side. The difficulties which were to be overcome therein were well known to the Führer. A war would necessitate preparations in the economic, military, and political spheres. Within her modest possibilities, Spain had begun these preparations; was, of course, coming up against difficulties therewith which were being made for her by elements in America and Europe, hostile to the Axis. Therefore, Spain must mark time and often look kindly toward things with which she was thoroughly not in accord.

Franco then came to speak of Spain's growing provisioning difficulties and in this connection mentioned that the United States and Argentina apparently were precisely following orders from London, for there had been cases in which the channel through the British Embassy immediately removed difficulties in both the above-mentioned countries. The difficulties already existing would be more intensified by the bad harvests. In spite of this, Spain with a view toward her spiritual alliance with the Axis powers, has assumed the same attitude toward the war as Italy had in the past autumn.

The Führer replied that he was glad to see the Caudillo personally for the first time in his life after he had so often been with him in spirit during the Spanish Civil War. He knew precisely how difficult the struggle in Spain had been, since he himself since 1918–19 had had to go through similar grave conflicts, until he had helped the National Socialist movement to victory. Spain's enemies had been his enemies, too. The struggle which was raging in Europe today would be decisive for the fate of the Continent and the world for a long time to come. Militarily, this struggle in itself was decided. Germany had established a front against the British Islands from the North Cape to the Spanish border and would no longer allow the

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English a landing on the Continent. The military actions were now taking place right in English motherland. In spite of that, England had certain hopes: Russia and America. With Russia, Germany had treaties. Aside from this, however, he (the Führer) immediately after conclusion of the French campaign had undertaken a reorganization of the German Army so that, beginning with March of the coming year, the latter would present itself in the following strength: of a total of 230 divisions, 186 were attacking divisions. The rest consisted of defense and occupation troops. Of the 186 attacking divisions, 20 were armored divisions equipped with German material, while 4 additional armored brigades possessed captured material in part. In addition to this there were 12 motorized divisions. With this Army strength Germany was grown ready for any eventuality. He (the Führer) believed that England was wrong too in placing her hope on Russia. If the latter country were aroused at all from its inactivity, it would, at the most, be active on the German side. It was therefore a matter of misspeculation on the part of England.

With respect to America, there was no need to be afraid of an active attack during the winter. There would therefore be no change in the present military situation. Until America's military power would be fully armed, at least 18 months to two years would pass.

There would arise, nevertheless, a considerable danger if America and England entrenched themselves on the islands stretching out off Africa in the Atlantic Ocean. The danger was all the greater because it was not certain whether the French troops stationed in the colonies would under all circumstances remain loyal to Pétain. The greatest threat existing at the moment was that a part of the Colonial Empire would, with abundant material and military resources, desert France and go over to De Gaulle, England, or the United States. Moreover, the war of Germany against England was continuing. The difficulty was that the operations had to be carried on across an ocean which Germany at sea did not control. She had only air supremacy. Of course the weather over the Channel for exercising it had, up to then, been extremely unfavorable. Since the middle of August there had not even been five fair days, and the major attack against England had as yet not been able to begin since an attack against the British naval forces, on the part of Germany, could only be carried out from the air, whereby, under good atmospheric conditions, the British fleet had always been forced to yield, according to previous experiences.

According to meteorological forecasts which prophesiedwith certainty a period of fair weather for seven to eight days, a great air attack had been started on a fixed day. Of course it had to be broken ffo again after lasting half a day because of a sudden change in the weather.

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Germany had, up to this point, carried off very great victories. But for this very reason, he (the Führer) wanted to guard against suffering a failure by some thoughtless move. In this connection, the Führer mentioned as an example of his tactics, the events of the great offensive in France. Originally he had had the plan of striking the great blow as early as October of the previous year, but had constantly been hindered from doing this by the weather. He had suffered because of not being able to act but he had been really determined not to begin the offensive in bad weather, but on the contrary had preferred to wait until the weather conditions became better. When the meteorologists had then reported to him that on May 10 the normal period of clear weather for the summer would begin, he had, on May 8, issued the order for attack. The result of this attack was known, and in the battle against England he would act precisely as in the French offensive. He would begin the great attack only when the weather conditions permitted absolute success. In the meantime, England, and especially London, was being bombarded day and night. On London alone, 3,500,000 kilograms of bombs had been dropped. Many harbor installations, factories, and armament works were thus being shattered; England's approaches were being mined; and an increasing U-boat activity was contributing to the further isolation of the Islands. At the moment, the number of U-boats being finished every month was 10. In spring, it would rise to 17; in July to 25; and after that up to 34 per month. He hoped the concentrated activity of the air-arm, mine-layers and destroyers, U-boats, and speed boats would do so much damage and harm to England that in the end attrition would set in. In spite of this, he was lying in wait in order to carry out the great blow during fair weather, even if this could not happen until spring. It is self-evident that the time during which such vast masses of troops were lying inactive would continue to be exploited.

Naturally Germany had an interest in ending the war in a short time if possible, since every additional month cost money and sacrifice. In the attempt to bring about the end of the war as soon as possible and to render the entry of the United States into the war more difficult, Germany had concluded the Tripartite Pact. This Pact was compelling the United States to keep its Navy in the Pacific Ocean and to prepare herself for a Japanese attack from that direction. In Europe as well, Germany was attempting to expand her base. He could confidentially report that several other nations had announced their intention of joining the Tripartite Pact.

To guarantee her petroleum supply, Germany has sent pursuit squadrons and *Panzer* troops to Rumania upon the request of the Rumanian Government and in agreement with it.

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The great problem that was to be solved at the moment consisted in hindering the De Gaulle movement in French Africa from further expanding itself, and (hindering) the establishment, in this way, of bases for England and America on the African coast. A danger in this direction was actually present. The Pétain government was in the deplorable condition of having to liquidate a war for which it was not responsible, for the consequences of which, however, its opponents blamed it. It was now a matter of preventing De Gaulle from receiving an increase in power from this difficult position of the French Government, something which moreover would lead France to complete collapse. Finally, the attempt had to be made to bring France herself to a definite stand against England. This indeed was a difficult undertaking because there were still two tendencies in France: A Fascist one represented by Pétain and Laval, and an opposition one which wanted to carry on a double-dealing game with England. Moreover, it was particularly difficult to stir the French to a clear stand because they did not know how the peace would look. On the other hand, nothing could be said about the peace as long as the war was not completely ended, for one of Germany's opponents certainly had to pay for the war. Were England soon overpowered, Germany would then be ready without further ado to grant France easier peace terms. Should the war, however, continue on and should the English, as a result, offer Germany a compromise, she (Germany) would certainly not continue to fight only to spare France. Moreover, Germany needed France as a base as long as she was fighting against England. Yesterday he had, in all frankness, informed Vice President Laval of this interpretation and he would, on the morrow, speak with Pétain in precisely the same manner.

The purpose of this conference in Hendaye was the following: If they would be successful in effecting quite a large front against England, then the struggle would be substantially easier for all the participants and could be ended sooner. In setting up this front, the Spanish desires and the French hopes were obstacles in the path. Were England no longer participating in the war and if there were no De Gaulle, one would not have to think of relinquishing the demands on France. France could then be brought to submit and, in case she did not wish to cooperate, she could be occupied by the military within 12 days without any difficulty. More difficult would be the solution of the administrative problems and the economic problems. To occupy North Africa would of course be difficult and would not be possible without a strong military effort. The French knew that they had to sacrifice something in the peace treaty. They counted on losing the German colonies and Alsace-Lorraine; they knew that border rectifications would be undertaken and that Nice, Corsica,

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and Tunis would be lost to them. In the latter case, they would of course be very downcast over the loss and would prefer to make an arrangement which would, in another fashion, assure access to the raw materials there. Such an arrangement would be a fraud, however, for whoever no longer had the country, to him, at the proper moment, would no longer be given the raw materials. There was the danger that, if it were concretely asserted to the French that they would have to get out of certain African areas, the African possessions would perhaps desert France even with the concurrence of the government of Vichy. In order to meet this danger, he had worked up a general formula which he had developed yesterday to Monsieur Laval. In doing this he did not allow himself to make any concrete statement of the territorial changes to take place after the war. . . .

(The record of this conversation is incomplete.)

No. 9. German Foreign Office Memorandum

BERLIN, *October 31, 1940*

Reporter: *Councillor of Legation Kramarz*

NOTE

The Naval Warfare Command informs that the necessity exists in connection with naval operations in the Bay of Biscay for being able to supply German destroyers with fuel in out-of-the-way bays of the Spanish coast. For this purpose, German tankers would be sent there, from which replenishing would take place by night in order thus to guarantee the secrecy. The Naval Warfare Command has in this connection pointed to the fact that the Spanish Government has already shown similar obligingness in the supplying of German U-boats.

The Naval Warfare Command requests opinion and corresponding instruction of the Spanish Government.

Herewith submitted to

Ambassador Ritter

KRAMARZ

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No. 10. Telegram From the German Ambassador in Madrid to the Foreign Office in Berlin

MADRID, *December 5, 1940*

In reply to proposal made by Embassy as instructed, Foreign Minister has now informed that Spanish Government has agreed to the placing in readiness of German tankers in out-of-the-way bays of the Spanish coast for the supplying of German destroyers with fuel. Foreign Minister vigorously requested observing greatest caution in carrying out measure.

STOHRER

No. 11. Telegram From the German Ambassador in Madrid to the Foreign Office in Berlin

MADRID, *December 12, 1940.*

STRICTLY SECRET

In reply to telegraphic directive No. 2246 of December 11.

The protocol of General Vigón covering the conference of Admiral Canaris with the Generalissimo (December 7, 1940) reads in translation:

"Admiral was received 19:30 o'clock in presence of General Vigón. Admiral presents Chief of State Führer's greeting and conveys Germany's wish to undertake attack upon Gibraltar within a short time in connection with which German troops are to march into Spain on January 10. Reports that the Führer considers this moment the most favorable since the troops now available for operation are directly thereafter to be used for other undertakings and therefore could not be reserved for indefinite time. Admiral reports that as soon as march of troops began, economic cooperation of Germany would at once begin.

"To this Generalissimo explains to Admiral that it was impossible for Spain for reasons duly presented to enter into the war on the suggested date.

"1. English Fleet still possesses such freedom of operation that the success being expected in Gibraltar—which he considers certain and quick—would very soon be dimmed by loss of the possessions of Guinea and later on one of the Canary Islands. Further, pretexts

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would be given England and the United States for occupying the Azores, Madeira, and the Cape Verde Islands.

"2. Although tied up with difficulties because of restriction of foreign trade, military preparation of Spain has progressed. They are endeavoring to improve as much as possible defense of the islands and of coast, and are strengthening artillery of the Straits. Everything is however incomplete and unfinished; this is however not the actual reason which is preventing Spain from accepting the proposed date.

"3. Spain's provisioning is absolutely inadequate both with respect to the present scanty supplies, as well as with respect to their distribution. There are at the moment two problems:

a. the deficiency in foodstuffs, especially grain, which latter [deficiency] is estimated at one million tons.

b. the inadequacy of transports due to lack of railway materials and because of the compulsory restriction in the use of motor trucks. If one adds to it the discontinuance of the sea transports as results of the war, the situation of many provinces would become unbearable.

"4. Generalissimo and Government are endeavoring to remove these difficulties. They effected grain-purchases in South America and Canada; they are pushing the purchase of railway cars and are expediting provision of locomotives; they are effecting purchases of gas generators for motor trucks for the eventuality of a complete lack of gasoline. But incipient exhaustion of all supplies and restriction of foreign trade are preventing quick improvement.

"5. For these reasons Spain cannot enter into the war within a short time. She could also not wage a long war without imposing unbearable sacrifices upon the Spanish people. Aside from that, a long war would with certainty bring with it loss of a part of the Canary Islands, which could only be supplied for six months.

"6. In presenting all the difficulties which are preventing Spain from accepting the proposed date, Generalissimo wishes to stress that he is not only thinking of Spain's advantages but is also considering those of Germany, for, in his opinion, in a war of rather lengthy duration Spain's weakened condition would certainly represent disadvantage and burden for Germany.

"Admiral asked Generalissimo whether, under these conditions, which are preventing fixing the 10th of January as the date, it would be possible now already to set a different later date. Generalissimo replies that since removal of difficulties depends not only upon the will of Spain, he too could name no definite date, which might have to undergo change because of the circumstances. In any case, his attention and his effort would be directed toward hastening and com-

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pleting Spain's preparations. This preparation was being continued with vigor, something which the Admiral himself would have the opportunity of confirming upon his next visit to the area of the Straits. Generalissimo also shows Admiral photographs of the mortar 240, which is to make up for the lack of heavy artillery and air arms, and with which tests are at the moment being made.

"Generalissimo considers it advisable that a German economist visit Spain in order to examine the then-existing condition and to pass on to his Government a first-hand impression. He agrees with the Admiral that preparatory studies and labors begun be continued jointly and in the same discreet form hitherto carried out.

"He then charges the Admiral with conveying to the Führer his most cordial greetings and with reporting the conference [to him] at the same time expressing again his esteem to the Admiral and his delight at seeing him again in Spain.

"signed JUAN VIGÓN *Divisional General*"

End of the protocol

STOHRER

No. 12. Letter From Hitler to Franco, February 6, 1941

February 6, 1941

DEAR CAUDILLO!

If I write this letter it is done in order to determine once again with extreme clarity the individual phases of the development of a situation which is not only important for Germany and Italy but could have been of decisive importance to Spain.

When we had our meeting, it was my aim to convince you, Caudillo, of the necessity of common action of those states whose interests in the final analysis are certainly tied up indissolubly with each other. For centuries, Spain has been persecuted by the same enemies against whom today Germany and Italy are forced to fight. In addition to the earlier imperial strivings inimical to our three nations there now arose, moreover, antitheses conditioned by world-outlook: The Jewish-international democracy, which reigns in these states, will not excuse any of us for having followed a course which seeks to secure the future of our peoples in accordance with fundamental principles determined by the people and not those imposed by capital. As concerns the German determination to follow this fight through to the final conse-

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quence, I need waste no word. The Duce thinks no differently. On the basis of this analysis, the Japanese people as well will not in the long run get by, unless it be by a submission sacrificing the future of the Japanese people. I am now convinced that Spain faces the same fate. Caudillo, if your struggle against the elements of destruction in Spain was successful, it was only because of the democratic opponents forced to be cautious by attitude of Germany and Italy. *You will be forgiven, Caudillo, but never for this victory!* Just as little does England think of letting you remain for a long period in North Africa opposite Gibraltar—as soon as she is once again in a position of power. The Spanish seizure of the Tangier zone would in such a case—and this is my deepest conviction, Caudillo—only be a passing intermezzo. England, and probably America too, will do everything to render this entry into the Mediterranean in the future even more secure under their dominion than up to now. It is my most heartfelt conviction that the battle which Germany and Italy are now fighting out is thus determining the future destiny of Spain as well. Only in the case of our victory will the present regime continue to exist. Should Germany and Italy lose this war, however, then any future for a really national and independent Spain would be impossible.

I have thus been striving to convince you, Caudillo, of the necessity in the interests of your own country and the future of the Spanish people, of uniting yourself with those countries who formerly sent soldiers to support you, and who today of necessity, are also battling not only for their own existence, but indirectly for the national future of Spain as well.

Now at our meeting we agreed that Spain declare its readiness to sign the Three-Power Pact and to enter the war. In setting the date, periods in the far future were never considered or even mentioned, but instead the conversation always was concerned with a very short time-limit within which you, Caudillo, still believed that you could carry out various economic measures favorable for your country.

I personally have been skeptical from the beginning about the hope of receiving very soon more real economic benefits for Spain.

1. England indeed has no thought at all of really helping Spain! England is only endeavoring to postpone the Spanish entry into the war, to put it off in order in this way continually to increase her distress and thus to be able finally to overthrow the Spanish Government of that time.

2. But even if England were about to think otherwise, in an impulse toward some kind of sentimentality never present in British history up to now, she could not really help Spain under any conditions. She is absolutely not in the condition even in transportation alone to aid another country in a time in which she herself has already

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been forced to the most rigorous retrenchments in her standard of living. And the need for transport space will as the months go by not decrease but instead will get more and more serious.

In spite of the fact that I, therefore—as stated—have been thoroughly skeptical about this from the beginning, I nonetheless brought to bear every bit of appreciation for your efforts in at least trying, even before entering the war, to get shipments of foodstuffs into Spain from countries overseas as well.

Germany, however, has for her part, declared herself ready to deliver to Spain, immediately after undertaking entrance into the war, food, that is—grain—to as great an extent as possible! Furthermore, Germany has declared herself prepared to replace the 100,000 tons of grain which was waiting in Portugal destined for Switzerland in order that it might benefit Spain immediately. *This of course remains contingent upon the final decision for Spain's entry into the war. For about one thing, Caudillo, there must be clarity: We are fighting a battle of life and death and cannot at this time make any gifts. If it should later be asserted that Spain could not enter the war because she received no supplies, that would not be true!* For immediately after settling the entry into the war, a fixed date of which there has as yet been no outward indication at all, Spain would receive the first supplies, that is, 100,000 tons of grain. I doubt whether 100,000 tons of grain could really have reached Spain from abroad within the same period of time, even if such an inclination had existed. Thus, I also doubt that this is going to happen. The assertion, however, that—if our grain had been delivered immediately—the Spanish people could thus by propaganda have been prepared for entry into the war is self-contradictory for another reason.

You, yourself, Caudillo, have indeed personally indicated to me the importance of not yet consummating publicly the entrance into the Three-Power Pact, because you feared that this would have hurt your other efforts, for example in obtaining more grain, indeed would perhaps have wrecked them. How much less possible would it then have been to carry on open propaganda for entering the war? No, I am taking the liberty once more to confirm that:

1. During our conversation, it was never considered that Spain's entry into the war would perchance not take place until autumn or the coming winter, and that—

2. *Germany was ready to furnish supplies to the Spanish Government at the moment when the final date for entering the war was determined.*

When I had the request made to you, Caudillo, with the impression of urgency to bring relief to the Italian ally and to set this date in the middle or the end of January, that is, to permit the German

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march against Gibraltar to begin on or after January 10, in order to start attacking at the end of January, then for the first time our negotiators were unequivocally informed that such an early date could absolutely not be considered and this was again motivated by economic factors. However, when I thereupon let it be known again that Germany was indeed ready to begin at once with deliveries of grain, Admiral Canaris received the conclusive information that this delivery of grain would not be decisive at all, for via railway, it certainly could accomplish no practical effect. It was now further declared that since we had already made available batteries for the Canary Islands and moreover intended also to provide dive-bombers for additional security—even that was not decisive, since the Canary Islands from the point of view of food could no longer be held after six months.

That it is absolutely not a matter of economic factors but rather of others is apparent from the last statement in which it is stated that for climatic reasons to march in this season could not succeed, but on the contrary should only be considered at the earliest in the autumn or winter.

Under these conditions, of course, I do not understand why one should first want to declare an event impossible on economic grounds, which is now said to be impossible simply for climatic reasons. Now I do not believe that the German Army would be disturbed during its march in January by a climate which in itself is nothing out of the ordinary for us. In any case, we solved our problems in the Norwegian campaign under varied conditions and with severe climatic hindrances in the form of snow and ice, not to mention the fact that, from the participation of German soldiers and officers in your campaign, Caudillo, the climatic conditions of Spain are nothing unfamiliar to us. I regret most profoundly, Caudillo, this your opinion and your stand since:

1. I feel it my duty to bring relief to my Italian friend and ally and thus be of help to him indeed be of help at the moment when he experienced an unfortunate mishap. The attack on Gibraltar and the closing of the Straits would have changed the Mediterranean situation in one stroke.

2. I am of the conviction that in war, time is one of the most important factors. Months which one lets slip by are often never regained again!

3. Finally however it is clear that, on January 10 if we had been able to cross the Spanish border with the first formations, Gibraltar would today be in our hands. That means: Two months have been lost, which otherwise would have helped to decide world history.

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4. I am further of the convictions that Spain's economic condition would have improved and not become worse because of what would in any case have come to Spain through us and that on the other hand the deliveries which since then actually came to Spain from abroad during this time can only amount to a fraction compared to that which would in any case have been delivered at once by us.

But quite aside from this, Caudillo, I should like now to mention the following:

The entrance of Spain into this struggle has certainly not been conceived of as exclusively to the benefit of the interests of Germany and Italy. Spain herself has advanced very great territorial claims for the fulfilment of which the Duce and I had declared ourselves ready in every degree which could at all be reconciled with an acceptable new arrangement of the African colonial possession for Europe and its countries. And I may point out in this regard that in this struggle up to now first Germany and then Italy, have suffered the most prodigious blood sacrifice, and that both, in spite of this, themselves made very modest claims.

In any case, however, the moment of military operations above all can only be proposed by the one who therewith assumes the main burden of the struggle and who must therefore calculate it into the total program of a military analysis which is after all of world-wide extent. That I myself have no other goal in mind than the common success is certainly understandable. Indeed in this case, Caudillo, my urging in and of itself only proves the strength of my consciousness of responsibility toward my ally as well. For wheresoever in the course of this war difficulties should arise, it will be my unbending will to help out with them; and my decision to make good in the final settlement whatever during one or another stage of this war can perhaps at first have miscarried. This affects Spain as well. *Spain will never get other friends than those given [her] in the Germany and Italy of today, unless it becomes a different Spain. This different Spain however would only be the Spain of decline and of final collapse. Even for this reason alone, Caudillo, I believe that we three men, the Duce, you, and I, are bound to one another by the most rigorous compulsion of history that is possible, and that thus we in this historical analysis ought to obey as the supreme commandment the realization that in such difficult times, not so much an apparently wise caution as the bold heart, rather, can save nations.*

Moreover, Caudillo, this war is decided regardless of what ephemeral successes the British believe they can achieve anywhere on the periphery. For independently thereof, the fact remains that the British power in Europe is broken and that the mightiest military

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machine in the world stands ready for every additional task which may be put to it to solve. And how good and reliable this instrument is, the future will prove.

Accept my cordial and comradely greetings.

Your

ADOLF HITLER

No. 13. Letter From General Franco to Hitler

EL PARDO, *26 February 1941*

DEAR FÜHRER:

Your letter of the 6th makes me wish to send you my reply promptly, since I consider it necessary to make certain clarifications and confirmation of my loyalty.

I consider as you yourself do that the destiny of history has united you with myself and with the Duce in an indissoluble way. I have never needed to be convinced of this and as I have told you more than once, our Civil War since its very inception and during its entire course is more than proof. I also share your opinion that the fact that Spain is situated on both shores of the Strait forces her to the utmost enmity toward England, who aspires to maintain control of it.

We stand today where we have always stood, in a resolute manner and with the firmest conviction. You must have no doubt about my absolute loyalty to this political concept and to the realization of the union of our national destinies with those of Germany and Italy. With the same loyalty, I have made clear to you since the beginning of these negotiations the conditions of our economic situation, the only reasons why it has not been possible up to now to determine the date of Spain's participation.

Having in mind our own post-war difficulties, you will recall that I have never fixed too short a period for our entry into the war. Permit me, Führer, to say that the time elapsed until this moment has not been completely lost, since we have been obtaining not certainly great enough quantities of grain to permit us to build stocks, but certainly for some of the bread necessary for daily sustenance of the people who otherwise would have perished of starvation in considerable numbers.

Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that in this question of the supply of foodstuffs, Germany has not fulfilled her offers of effective

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support until very recently. We are now beginning to move in the realm of concrete facts and within this field there is nothing I desire more than to hasten the negotiations as much as possible. With this end in view several days ago I sent to you information on our needs as to foodstuffs and in general economic and military fields. These data are open to new examination, clarification, verification, and discussion in order to reach quickly the solution which interests us both equally. However, you will understand that at a time when the Spanish people is suffering the greatest starvation and enduring all sorts of privations and sacrifices, it is not certainly propitious for me to ask further sacrifices of them if my appeal is not preceded by an alleviation of this situation, which at the same time may permit us to carry out beforehand an intelligent propaganda on the constant friendship and effective support of the German people, which will reawaken in the Spaniard the sentiments of sincere friendship and admiration which he has always had for your Nation.

My remarks about our climate were simply an answer to your suggestions, and were not in any way a pretext to postpone indefinitely that which at the right moment it will be our duty to do.

During the recent Bordighera conference I gave proof to the world of the nature of my resolute attitude; this conference also served as a call to the Spanish people marking the direction in which lie their national obligations and the preservation of their existence as a free nation.

One observation I must repeat to your Excellency; the closing of the Strait of Gibraltar is not only a prerequisite for the immediate amelioration of the situation of Italy but also perhaps for the end of the war. However, in order that the closing of Gibraltar may have a decisive value it is also necessary that the Suez Canal be closed at the same time. If this last circumstance should not take place, we who are making the actual contribution of our military effort have the duty sincerely to say that the situation of Spain in the event of an inordinately prolonged war would then become extremely difficult.

You speak of our demands and you compare them with yours and those of Italy. I do not believe that one could describe the Spanish demands as excessive, still less, when one considers the tremendous sacrifice of the Spanish people in a battle which was a worthy forerunner of the present one. Concerning this point the necessary preciseness does not exist in our agreement as well. The protocol of Hendaye—permit me to express it—is in this respect extremely vague and Your Excellency remembers the conditions (today so changed) of this vagueness and lack of preciseness. The facts in their logical development have today left far behind the circumstances

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which in the month of October had to be taken into consideration with respect to the prevailing situation, and the protocol then existing must at the present be considered outmoded.

These are my answers, dear Führer, to your observations. I want to dispel with them all shadow of doubt and declare that I stand ready at your side, entirely and decidedly at your disposal, united in a common historical destiny, desertion from which would mean my suicide and that of the Cause which I have led and represent in Spain. I need no confirmation of my faith in the triumph of your Cause and I repeat that I shall always be a loyal follower of it.

Believe me your sincere friend, with my cordial greetings,

F. FRANCO

To:

His Excellency ADOLF HITLER
Führer of the German People

No. 14. Secret Protocol Between the German and Spanish Governments

At the time in which the intention of the German Government to deliver to the Spanish Army in the shortest time possible arms, war equipment, and war material of modern quality and in sufficient quantity is to be realized, the Spanish Government, at the request of the Reich Government, declares that it is determined to resist every entry by Anglo-American forces upon the Iberian Peninsula or upon Spanish territory outside of the Peninsula, that means, therefore, in the Mediterranean Sea, in the Atlantic and in Africa as well as in the Spanish Protectorate of Morocco, and to ward off such an entry with all the means at its disposal.

Both parties obligate themselves to keep this declaration, prepared in the German language and in the Spanish language absolutely secret.

MADRID, *February 10, 1943*

FOR THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT:
VON MOLTKE

FOR THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT:
GOMEZ JORDANA

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No. 15. Notes on Conversation Between General Franco and Ambassador Dieckhoff

BERLIN, *December 15, 1943*

The conference with the Spanish Chief of State, which took place on Friday, December 3, at the Pardo Palace, in the presence of the Foreign Minister, Count Jordana, and lasted somewhat over an hour, took the following course:

I explained to the Chief of State that I had now been in Madrid more than seven months and had attempted to secure for myself a picture of the Spanish foreign policy. I had the feeling, and the Reich Government was under the same impression, that the foreign policy of Spain was recently beginning to change. We observed in a number of spheres little of a positive attitude of the Spanish Government with respect to Germany and we had especially the feeling that this change in the Spanish attitude was to be traced to English and American pressure. I could only point with the greatest emphasis—and I was speaking on the order of my Government which was taking a very serious interest in these matters—to the fact that it would be a very dangerous policy for Spain to make concession after concession to the English and Americans; Spain would thereby find herself on the down-grade, and she would become more and more dependent upon the Anglo-Saxon powers. Only a completely firm and stable policy which made no concessions was proper and guaranteed that the English and Americans would permanently refrain from further pressures; it would be a fatal error if the Spanish Government believed that it could change its course with allegedly slight concessions; the Anglo-Saxons would seize not only the little finger but the hand and the whole arm and would draw Spain deeper and deeper into a relationship of dependency. I certainly could not believe that this was the intention of the Spanish Government for the Chief of State must certainly be clear about the fact that the policies of the English and of the Americans—as they always had been—were interested only in a weak Spain, in contrast to the German policy, which was always intent upon a strong national Spain. I then mentioned in detail those points to which we especially objected (concession by the Spanish Government in the question of passage of French fugitives through Spain to North Africa, compliant conduct of the Spanish Government in the question of Italian merchant ships in Spanish harbors, unjustified internment of various German U-boat crews, withdrawal of the Blue Division, action against German ships in Vigo and in the Canary Islands, and so forth). I told the Caudillo that I considered it my duty to lay before him in all sincerity all these facts of the case summed up, as I had already

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often done with Count Jordana, and that I was requesting him (Caudillo) to tell me how he stood on these matters.

The Chief of State listened to me seriously and calmly and then stated the following: He would like to emphasize at once that there was no question of the Spanish foreign policy changing. He knew quite certainly that the German policy was pursuing the objective of strengthening Spain, while the English and American policies traditionally aimed at weakening Spain. Further, he knew for certain and was clearly conscious of the fact that only the victory of Germany would make possible the continued existence of the regime of Franco; a victory of the Anglo-Saxons, in spite of all the pacifying declarations which would be made to him from time to time in this respect by the English and American side, would mean his own annihilation. He therefore was hoping with all his heart for the victory of Germany and he had only one wish that this victory would come as soon as possible. In the meantime, however, he was in a difficult position. His country was only now recovering slowly from the effects of the Civil War, and it could only recover if it imported gasoline and cotton from abroad, products which he could receive only from the Americans and only with English navicerts. The Anglo-Saxons were ready to deliver these things to him and were delivering to a certain extent, they were demanding in return, however, that Spain assume not too outspoken a pro-Axis attitude and that matters which were indisputably unneutral should be discontinued. This was the reason why the Spanish Government recently had permitted a few modifications. The Caudillo took up these points in detail. He said on the subject of the Blue Division that recently it had actually become more difficult to mobilize Spanish volunteers for this unit and that for this reason alone they had to start on a conversion of the Division into a weaker Legion. The Anglo-Saxons had presented no ultimatum with regard to the withdrawal of the Blue Division, but he had to expect that they sooner or later would present an ultimatum for the withdrawal, whereby the Spanish Government would then find itself in a very difficult position; for this reason he had preferred to anticipate such an ultimatum and to request of the Reich Government the withdrawal of the Division. He emphasized, however, that the attitude of the Spanish Government against Bolshevism and Communism would thereby be altered in no way; and that at home as well as abroad this struggle was continuing, just as against Jewry and Freemasonry. As concerns the question of the passage of French refugees through Spain to North Africa, this was a problem which has for a long time been causing the Spanish Government annoyance and inconveniences. It was a matter of several thousand people, almost all of them bad, undesirable elements, who had in some way succeeded in getting into

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Spain across the border of the Pyrenees, and who could not be turned over to the German authorities since this would provoke a frightful outcry on the part of the Anglo-Saxons, and who therefore must either be retained in Spain or thrust out over the other borders. The retention of these people meant not only a great financial burden but also a certain internal political danger since it was a matter predominantly of Communistic riff-raff. He had therefore granted his permission for a large part of these people to be transported to North Africa. To my objection that this was really a matter of a clear favoring of the enemy, who was sticking these men into uniform and then having them fight against Germany, the Caudillo answered by saying that this was not to be feared, since it was a matter of people so inferior and so undesirous of fighting, who had actually fled from France only to avoid work, and that their entry into the De Gaulle army would mean no strengthening of the enemy fighting power worth mentioning at all. Moreover, he had directed that the transports cease from now on. As concerned the Italian ships in Spanish harbors, the Caudillo emphasized that the warships were interned and would remain interned; the crews of the warships would be transported into Spanish camps. As concerned the merchant ships, the legal question was very unclear. In two cases they had not been able to avoid letting the ships put to sea upon the request of Ambassador Badoglio. The other cases were still being investigated, and it was probable that most, if not all, of the ships would be retained in Spain. In this connection it was very important that the Mussolini government order a representative to Spain as soon as possible, to take up these matters, even though previously the points of view of the Mussolini government had already been represented by the Italian shipping interests themselves and by the German Embassy. As concerned the question of the recognition of the Mussolini government, the Caudillo emphasized—just as previously in the conference of October 5—the Spanish Government was ready to receive an unofficial representative. On the question of the U-boat crews, the Caudillo was of the opinion that on this point the English had been extraordinarily sharp in insisting that these crews be interned. The situation according to international law—contrary to the German assertions—had not been cleared up totally without objection, and the Spanish Government had therefore considered it wiser to proclaim for the time being the internment. He could assure me, however, that the crews would be set free gradually, as had already happened in previous cases; and moreover the most important officer, Lieutenant Commander Brandi, the wearer of the Oak Leaves, had, with the consent of the Spanish Government, immediately been let out of Spain. With respect to the attitude of the Spanish press, the Chief

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of State said that it was indeed being kept somewhat more objective and somewhat more neutral to avoid protest from English and American sides, but that it however was still quite predominantly appreciative of Germany and sympathetic to Germany, and that it doubtlessly was very much better than any other neutral press, such as the Turkish, Swedish, Swiss, Portuguese, or Argentine. Even with respect to this, only a somewhat more cautious press line had resulted in order to avoid conflicts, the Spanish Government was not however thinking of allowing the Anglo-Saxons an inroad into the press, just as little as she was thinking of permitting them an inroad into Spanish foreign policy.

In summarizing, the Caudillo said that he believed that this cautious policy of Spain was not only in the interest of Spain but also in the interest of Germany. If because of a newspaper article or for any other of the reasons mentioned above, a serious conflict with the Anglo-Saxon powers should result, this would in his opinion not at the present moment be desirable for Germany as well; a neutral Spain which was furnishing Germany with wolfram and other products was, in his opinion, more valuable for Germany at the present than a Spain which would be drawn into the war. Of course Spain would not go beyond the comparatively trivial concessions mentioned above. Demands as had been made upon the Portuguese by the English side would not be accepted by the Spanish. In a case of this kind Spain would fight. Of course, Spain was not only economically very dependent, but was also militarily rather weak. She had, indeed a good army with brave soldiers and good officers, but she did not have sufficient weapons at her disposal; especially lacking were heavy weapons and airplanes. Had Spain a stronger armament, the Anglo-Saxons would proceed less presumptuously; also Spain would then be able to strengthen Portugal, with whom she was on very friendly terms, against English pressure even more than this had hitherto been possible. The Caudillo therefore urgently requested that if possible we should send more weapons than we had already sent and more than we had had in mind. The Chief of State concluded the conversation in a very cordial fashion, by emphasizing again his hope for the German victory and his friendship for Germany and very warmly requested me to greet the Führer most cordially on his behalf.

Of interest was the fact that the Chief of State, in connection with the mention of the Portuguese situation, remarked that Salazar, in his conference with Jordana, shortly before the conclusion of the Azores agreement, had stressed the fact that he was finding himself in a very difficult position and was having to give in; not only were the English exerting very strong pressures, but his own, Salazar's, position was being weakened by the fact that General Carmona as well as half of the army was taking a different stand than he himself.

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